



District of Columbia Professional Standards for Teaching

Vision: Students come first, and what matters most is the teaching and learning that occurs in the classroom. Teachers expect that all students will achieve their full potential by creating a culture of achievement where students own their learning and all students achieve socially and academically.

Knowledge of the Child

Teachers understand how students learn and develop and provide challenging learning experiences that support their intellectual, social, and emotional development.

Teachers...

- Create developmentally appropriate instruction that takes into account individual learner' strengths, interests, and needs and that enable each learner to advance and accelerate his/her learning.
- Model respect for students' diverse cultures, language skills and experiences.
- Adapt their teaching for the benefit of students with special needs through inclusion and other models of effective practice.

Classroom Environment

The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

Teachers...

- Use principles of effective classroom management to establish classrooms in which clear rituals, routines and standards of behavior are maintained.
- Manage the learning environment to actively and equitably engage learners by organizing, allocating, and coordinating the resources of time, space, and learners' attention.
- Help students establish a classroom environment characterized by mutual respect of diverse backgrounds and ideas, and intellectual risk-taking.
- Create an environment that is physically and emotionally safe, and includes learning situations in which students work independently, collaboratively, and/or as a whole class.

Content Knowledge

Teachers have a deep content knowledge base sufficient to create learning experiences that reflect on understanding of central concepts, vocabulary, structures, and tools of inquiry of the disciplines/content areas they teach.

Teachers...

- Know their content areas, including common core standards where applicable, and understand how knowledge in their content areas is created, organized, linked to other subject areas, and applied beyond the school setting.
- Effectively use multiple representations and explanations that capture key ideas in the content area, guide learners through learning progressions, and promote each learner's achievement of content standards.
- Select appropriate instructional materials and resources (including technological resources) based on their comprehensiveness, accuracy, and usefulness for representing particular ideas and concepts in the content areas.





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21st Century Skills

Teachers create learning experiences, including through use of a variety of technological tools, to encourage all students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, performance skills, and literacy across content areas.

Teachers...

- Design lessons that extend beyond factual recall and challenge students to work collaboratively to develop higher level cognitive skills including synthesizing knowledge, testing hypotheses, and exploring methods of inquiry and standards of evidence.
- Pose questions that encourage students to view, analyze, and interpret ideas from multiple perspectives.
- Use a variety of strategies that engage students in exploration, discovery, and hands-on activities.
- Expose students to a variety of technological tools and resources.

Planning

The teacher plans and designs coherent instruction based upon curriculum goals to enable students to meet challenging content standards, including common core standards where applicable.

Teachers...

- Individually and collaboratively select and create learning experiences that are appropriate for curriculum goals and content standards, and are relevant to learners.
- Collaborate with their colleagues to plan instruction that is vertically aligned, coherent, and coordinated.
- Design learning experiences to address each student's diverse learning strengths and needs and creates opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in different ways.

Data and Assessment

The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment and other student data to engage learners in their growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

Teachers...

- Engage learners in multiple ways of demonstrating knowledge and skill as part of the assessment process.
- Use multiple and appropriate types of assessment data to identify each student's learning needs and to develop differentiated learning experiences.
- Provide students with opportunities and guidance to evaluate their work and behavior against defined criteria and use the results of self-assessment to establish individual goals for learning.
- Use assessment results to provide students and parents with timely, helpful, and accurate feedback on their progress toward achievement goals.





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School and Family Involvement and Collaboration

Teachers work collaboratively with all school personnel, families, and the broader community to gain a deep understanding of teaching in an urban environment and to create a professional learning community that supports the improvement of teaching, learning, and student achievement.

Teachers...

- Develop relationships with students and their families to support learning, and promote trust and understanding.
- Engage collaboratively in the school-wide effort to build a shared vision and supportive culture, identify common goals and monitor and evaluate progress toward the goals.
- Collaborate effectively with the local community and community agencies, when and where appropriate, to promote a positive environment for student learning.
- Use technological tools and a variety of communication strategies to build local and global learning communities that engage learners, families, and colleagues.

Professional Development, Responsibilities and Ethics

Teachers reflect on their practice, model professional and ethical standards, and assume responsibility for their professional development by actively seeking and participating in opportunities to learn and grow as professionals.

Teachers...

- Solicit feedback from students, families, and administrators, coaches, and colleagues to reflect on and improve their teaching.
- Participate in continued, collaborative, high-quality professional learning opportunities that include 21st Century skills and knowledge, and meet the needs of students and their own professional growth goals.
- Actively investigate and consider new ideas, research-based practices, and local, state and federal initiatives that positively impact teaching learning.
- Effectively implement school and district policies, and support school programs.
- Understand and meet their ethical and professional responsibilities with integrity, honesty, fairness and dignity.

